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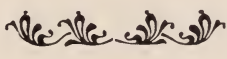
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QUARTERLY LETTERS AND NEWS

OF THE

ARABIAN MISSION



NUMBER FIFTY-FOUR, APRIL-JUNE, 1905

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The Arabian Mission.

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* Mrs. Thoms died April 25, 1905.

MISSIONARY LETTERS AND NEWS FROM ARABIA.

April-June, 1905.



DR. MARION WELLS THOMS.

A TRIBUTE OF LOVE AND ADMIRATION.

When the last mail from Arabia brought us the sad tidings of the departure of Mrs. Thoms from the forefront of the battle to rest and reward we felt how great was the loss to our station and to our mission. And since we cannot yet visit her grave in the little cemetery at Bahrein, it is fitting to place a wreath of words here to her memory now.

Dr. and Mrs. Thoms came to the field in December, 1898, and were for a time stationed at Busrah for language study. The following year they came to Bahrein and together took up the medical work which has

in their hands now grown to the dimensions of a hospital. Working so close together and sharing each other's joys and sorrows, it is not strange that our little band at Bahrein seem one family and in that family Mrs. Thoms won all hearts and put a touch of brightness into the lives of old and young. She it was who made our American holidays and Christian festivals so cheerful that we often forgot our exile from civilization. The children always found their way to her side of the house; she had a mother's heart for everyone's children and a love that never wearied for her own.

But it is not only in the quiet of the mission house that we shall miss her. She was not merely a missionary's wife, but herself a heroic and strong and self-denying missionary. Her triumphant deathbed showed that her thoughts even then were not only for her own, but for dark Arabia. Among her last words were the message: "*Have them send more missionaries for the work and to take the place of those that fall by the way.*" Everyone who knew Mrs. Thoms will remember her thorough conscientiousness and her heroic devotion. She was always ready at the call of duty and often, alas! worked above her strength for her Arabian sisters. They knew it and loved her. Her skill and patience as a physician, her faithfulness in language study, her self-effacement and humility, her power in prayer for others, and her cheerfulness—they all come up before us as we read of her death.

Surely the message she sends to the church, to those who can so easily send a missionary at their own charges or who might go themselves, will not fall on deaf ears. The words that Abraham Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg can by the change of a word or two be fittingly applied to the missionaries who have laid down their lives for and in Arabia: "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here about them, but it can never forget what they *did* there. It is for us, the living, to be dedicated to the unfinished work which they who fought there have thus far so nobly advanced. . . . That from these honored dead we may take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain."

The best tribute we can pay to those who fall at the front is to carry on the war, to send out recruits and to strengthen our positions and to wrestle in prayer for victory.

Holland, Mich., June 8.

S. M. AND A. E. ZWEMER.

A CALL TO PRAYER.

We, as fellow-workers in the evangelization of Arabia, very earnestly plead for the intercessory prayers of God's people; for ourselves, that His grace may abound in us unto holier living and more efficient service; for the Arab nation, that God may turn the hearts of many to accept Jesus as their Saviour; that many more workers may be sent to this neglected land, and that the avowed purpose of the established societies to reach the interior may speedily be realized.

Will not all, therefore, who rejoice in the salvation promised to our forefather Abraham, join with us daily in his prayer for this ancient people: "Oh! that Ishmael might live before thee!"

*The Arabian Mission of the R. C. A.,
The United Free Church of Scotland (Aden),
The Church Missionary Society (Bagdad),
The Danish Mission to South Arabia.*

REV. F. J. BARNY.

The call to prayer for Arabia herewith published had its origin at the last annual meeting of this Mission. There was present then P. W. Brigstocke, M.D., from the neighboring Mission at Bagdad, who, in the course of an address, spoke of the need of such a call and the desire of his Mission to join with us and all workers in Arabia in issuing one. The suggestion was immediately and warmly received by this Mission, and the writer was appointed to co-operate with the other societies and workers in the matter. It may not be amiss to mark here this first act of co-operation of missions in Arabia, and to note that it is a call to the Church.

I had hoped that its first appearance would be with the expressed approval of all the missionaries in Arabia, but we are so far apart that much time would elapse before the signatures of all could be secured. For good reasons we do not wish to delay its appearance until the next Quarterly, so it comes to you now with only the direct approval of the Arabian Mission and of the C. M. S. Turkish Arabia Mission. Knowing the temper of our Scotch co-workers in Southwest Arabia, I can, however, with full confidence present this appeal to you as unanimous from Arabia to the Church. If you will not accept my assurance on this point, then receive it as coming from the majority of the workers. What will you do with it? Its real origin is in our feeling that we cannot and ought not to bear the human part of the burden of the evangelization of this people alone, and that the Church must help to bear it. There is a divine part of the burden which God will bear when He sees His people bend their shoulders to what belongs to them. This is what we desire.

Kindly notice that we ask for some definite things to be prayed for, the most important of which I conceive to be "that He may turn the hearts of many to accept Jesus as their Saviour." This is God's own work and He will have His own way about it. He may use as means "many more" workers, and, if so, He will send them even as we pray. If He shall use any one of us or all as vessels of honor in glorifying His name in Arabia, or if He shall pass us by, we equally need your prayers. Whatever His purposes are, He has been long asking you to help in glorifying Himself and in His name we ask you anew to do so.

A FIRST TOUR AMONG THE WOMEN OF OMAN.

ELIZABETH CANTINE.

Having heard much from our missionaries about touring in Oman and along the Batina coast, I was glad to have the opportunity not long ago of going and seeing for myself what it was like. Our party consisted of Mr. Cantine and myself, with our colporter Ibrahim, and Ali, our servant. In order to reach any place in the interior or on the coast, one must pass through Muttra, a village about three miles from Muscat, where all the dates shipped from here are packed. As the road from here to Muttra is very steep and rocky, we did not attempt to ride our donkeys, but sent them packed and saddled in care of Ali and the donkey driver, while we went by sea in a little canoe called a *huri*. These small *huris* carry passengers to and from Muttra constantly, the fare being ten coppers, which is not quite two cents.

Soon after leaving Muttra we came to the little village of Ruie, which we had visited a week or so before; and a mile farther on is Oteia, another small village. From there on we had a ride of three hours or more on the Batina coast. The sand was so deep on the sea-shore that we were obliged to ride slowly, and we did not reach Ghubra, where we were to spend the night, till long after dark. We found a house all ready for us, a one-room hut made of date branches, such as most of the people in the villages along the coast live in. This hut was built for us by two men, a father and son, who had befriended our two colporters, Ibrahim and Saeed, about two years ago. They were then living in a small town, nearly a hundred miles inland, in the vicinity of which our colporters had spent some days. The people were very fanatical, many of them probably never having seen a Christian before. These two men became the hosts and guides to our colporters, and by this incurred the anger of the more fanatical ones. When the time came for our colporters to leave for the next city, they were told that a plot had been formed to murder them while on the way. They had to escape by night, guided by these two men along an unwatched path. When it was discovered that they had aided the Christians to escape, the anger of the people was so great that they came and murdered two others of the family. The old man's wife went that day alone in the heat to meet her husband and son and warn them not to return. As it was impossible for them to return, they were



WOMEN OF MUSCAT.

forced to leave their home and possessions, and came with our colporters to Muscat. After a while a place was found for them in the village of Ghubra. They come to Muscat frequently, and while here always attend our morning prayers and Sunday services. Having given up so much to befriend Christ's ambassadors, we hope that ere long they may give up all for Christ Himself.

The son's wife went with me to visit the women of the village, and a crowd soon gathered in and around the hut where we stopped. They asked a number of questions about our country, and our religion, and seemed much interested in it all. When my guide said it was time for her to return to her babies, they would not let me go, and said if I would stay and read to them a while longer, they would conduct me safely back. Of course I was only too glad to give them as much time as our stay in the place would allow.

The ride from Ghubra to the next village was not particularly enjoyable. The sun was hot, the road rough and stony, the scenery uninteresting, and the combination of saddle-bags and a rolled up mattress did not make a very comfortable seat. However, when we neared Hammam, the sight of its green gardens quite refreshed us. Hammam means *warm bath*, and the village derives its name from the hot springs which are found there.

We stayed in a place used by the sheikh of the village for entertaining strangers. A number of men came in to greet Mr. Cantine and Ibrahim, but the women do not come to these public places, so Ali and I went out to find them, going to the sheikh's harem first. We saluted a group of women outside of the house, but they did not return the salutation. Ali undertook to rebuke them for it, asking them if that was the way they treated a woman who had come to visit them. They said: "Oh! Is she a woman? We thought from her clothes that she must be a man." I wore a khaki riding skirt and a sun helmet, so they were quite excusable.

The old sheikh was a bit annoyed at it, though, and tried to make up for it by being unusually kind. He milked one of the goats that stood near, and after heating the milk, brought it to me. It was getting late by this time, and I was hungry enough to relish it. Before retiring for the night, the sheikh conducted us to one of the bathing places. The water from the hot springs flows to the village through cement water channels, and here and there along the way they have

built little cement cisterns where one can have a nice hot bath. The following morning they took us to see the springs, and the water was literally boiling up out of the ground.

The women, having recovered from their first shock, were very friendly, and I spent most of my time with them in their huts, while, at our stopping-place, Mr. Cantine and Ibrahim were having discussions with the men who were constantly coming and going. Some of the men and women accompanied us to the edge of the village when we left, and gave us most cordial invitations to come again.

Before we reached the next village we were caught in a terrific rain shower, and were pretty well drenched. Our bedding was all strapped under us, so we succeeded in keeping it fairly dry, and owing to the kindness of the people with whom we stayed, we passed a most comfortable night. The next morning was fair, and our host went with Mr. Cantine to see some of the prominent men, as is the custom among the Arabs. My hostess undertook to escort me. She called out to every woman we met, "Come, come and see my visitor, and talk with her. She knows Arabic." Before we had gone very far, nearly half of the women in the town were following us, and when we finally stopped, I had as large and attentive an audience as one could wish for.

We had planned a tour of two or three weeks, which would have taken us up to the mountains inland, but fighting among the Arabs there prevented this, so we contented ourselves with this short trip and came back to Muscat. One thing had worried me—that the women, never having seen a white woman before, might be afraid of me, or not wish to have anything to do with me, but I found that our missionaries and colporters had already prepared the way. In their former tours they had so won the confidence and respect of the people, that the women received me cordially, and I hope to be able to visit them again before long.

DEFINITE PRAYER.

REV. JAMES E. MOERDYK.

We know that Christian friends do pray for God's work in Arabia, for missionaries could not go out and continue in the work if they were not sustained by the prayers of the Church. We ought not to pray for the missionaries only, but in order to engage in their work,

whether present in the field or not. We read, "That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." May we not ask for united prayer as touching the following definite topics:

1. Kindly pray for a young man who once left his own people to have liberty in serving God according to the dictates of his conscience. He confessed Christ, was baptized, and even became a colporter, selling the Word which he professed was a blessing unto himself. But later on, when his conduct was not as becometh a follower of Christ, and when the missionary rebuked him and tried to lead him back into the right way, he repented not. He has since brought back all Christian books in his possession and has left for parts unknown to the missionaries. Pray that he may yet come back to the fold.*

2. For a young Turk who heard the Gospel, opened his heart to the Truth, and, in order to place himself where he could learn more about this way, resigned his position in the army and in another town opened a place of business to earn a livelihood. He comes to the missionary daily for Christian instruction.

3. For several in the Busrah field who are very much interested and in secret confess their belief in the Saviour. Pray that missionary and enquirers may be guided in planning and accomplishing much in their difficulties.

4. For an Arab who called at the hospital to hear the Word of God. He sought an interview with the missionary to speak with him about things spiritual. He seemed very sincere and was passing through on his way to some place where, as a total stranger, he might lose his fear of friends and devote himself to a study of Christianity. He asked for no help in the way of money, but for advice and direction to some country near by where missionaries would teach him.

5. For an Arab whom last year we learned to know in Muscat. So sincere and eager was he that he came to prayers and Bible lessons. His business called him elsewhere, but he has since twice called at the missionary's house and evidently continues steadfast. He has opened a shop in a town where, for the present, missionaries are forbidden entrance.

6. For a lad who can neither read nor write, but claims to want Christ and His religion. He first came asking for work and instruc-

*He has since come back for teaching.

tion. His first reason for wanting the Christians' religion was that they were more considerate and kind than Mohammedans. He has been roughly treated by Moslems here when they learned his business with the Christians. He is faithful in his work, and in his efforts to learn Christian truth bids fair to succeed. Daily attendance at prayers and a short lesson with the missionary are a beginning of better things if God adds His blessing.

7. For a father and son who are great friends of the missionaries. The father can read quite well and the son can, with a little help, read the Gospels. Both are Moslems and profess to desire no change, but they admire Christ's teaching and the Christian's life. When visiting in town they always strive to be present at prayers, and, if on Sunday, at the preaching service. O that such honest souls might be won for Christ!

EVERY-DAY LIFE IN BAHREIN.

MISS FANNY LUTTON.

There are many people who would say to us: "I suppose you have little or no romance in your life every day in Bahrein?" In a sense this is true; but still, life here is not monotonous by any means. I think a woman worker has far more variety in missionary work; because she is a woman. She has the privilege of entering the homes of the people, and can always get an audience of women. She can always carry books with her, and very often the opportunity is given her to read.

I wish you could have come with me to two houses, and you would have said, "What a contrast in the two places." The first house I entered, I saluted the woman who was near the entrance, but her manner was not very cordial. I then asked for the lady of the house, and the answer was given: "Oh, she died last year from cholera." Just then a little boy came to me and asked me to enter a room (a kind of out-house) where there was a poor old woman very sick. The poor old woman entreats me to prescribe for her. I tell her I am not a doctor, but will bring one to see her. Mrs. Thoms comes at my request. By that time the news has gone abroad, and many of the neighbors assemble in the courtyard. The old woman is in such a filthy condition, and this stable (for that is really what it is) so dirty.

Mrs. Thoms asked some women to wash the sick one; but not one will do it. There is nothing else for it, so Mrs. Thoms and I set to and give the poor old woman a good bath and put clean clothes on her. Now the next step is to get the place cleaned, and about four or five women begin to clean up. Could you have seen the collection of old rubbish you would not have forgotten it. One woman said: "This has not been cleaned for twenty years." and I well believe it. We stayed until the place was cleaned, and the sick one placed on a clean mat; and, really, the old woman and room looked like a transformation scene.

Mrs. Thoms and I had to laugh when we saw the clouds of dust ascending. But we had the satisfaction of seeing the sick one more comfortable, and of getting her thanks also.

The next house visited is very different. The people are very cordial, and ask the reason of my long absence. As I count the women I see nine around me, and then one notices the hand-bag I have with me, and wants to know "What is in it?" I tell her, "It is the Word of God—good news." One says: "Is it the Koran?" I answer, "No. But it is written in your Koran that the Gospel was sent down from God for the guidance of men, and we should not neglect the reading of it." All exclaim, "Oh, read to us!" and now comes the opportunity of proclaiming the good tidings.

I can tell you I left that house with a thankful heart, just because I had had the privilege and opportunity to witness about the Sinless Prophet, Who gave Himself a ransom, and Who invites the "weary and heavy laden" to come to Him for rest.

Oh, do pray for the poor women in Arabia, who have so little to cheer them, and who are living in darkness and error.

THINGS AS THEY WILL BE.

REV. S. M. ZWEMER, D.D.

At the last annual meeting of the missionaries on the field we carefully considered the need for a chapel and school at Bahrein. And, in view of the fact that our rent-contract for the present mission house there will terminate in a year or two, the question of building a permanent, convenient and healthful dwelling for all the missionaries there, was decided in the affirmative.

On my arrival in America, and at the first meeting of the Board of

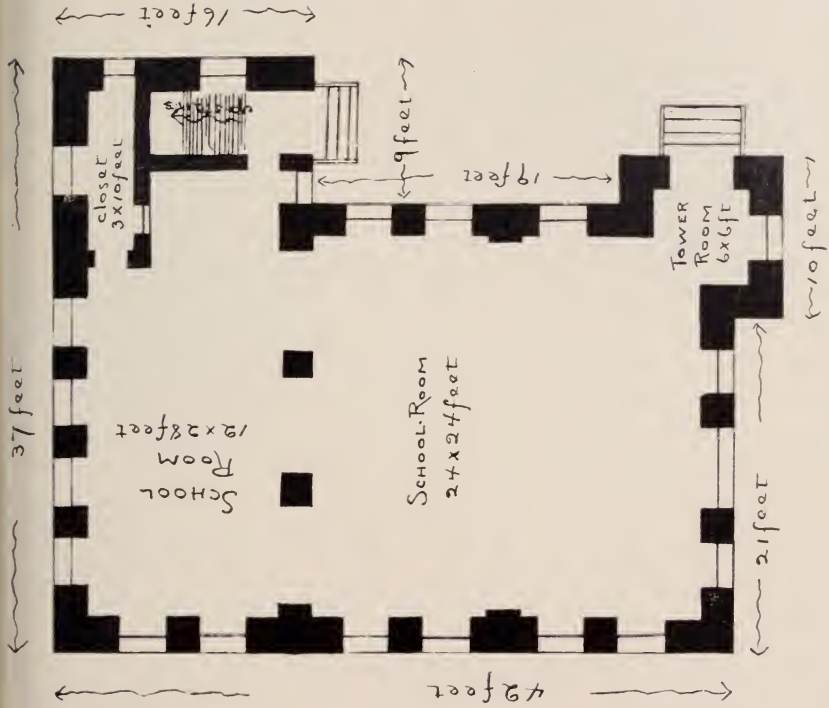
Trustees, it was "Resolved that Dr. Zwemer be authorized to raise \$2,000.00 from individuals, outside the ordinary sources of income, for a school and chapel-building at Bahrein." By the blessing of God the entire sum has been pledged and nearly all of it paid in. The whole sum was obtained from sixty friends of Arabia in our own or in sister churches, as a special gift for this Memorial School and Chapel as follows :

Thirty-one friends in Holland, Mich., gave.....	\$695.00
Seventeen friends in Zeeland, Mich., gave.....	510.00
Seven friends in Grand Rapids, Mich., gave.....	175.00
Three friends in New York State gave.....	300.00
Two friends in England gave.....	364.40
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	\$2,044.40

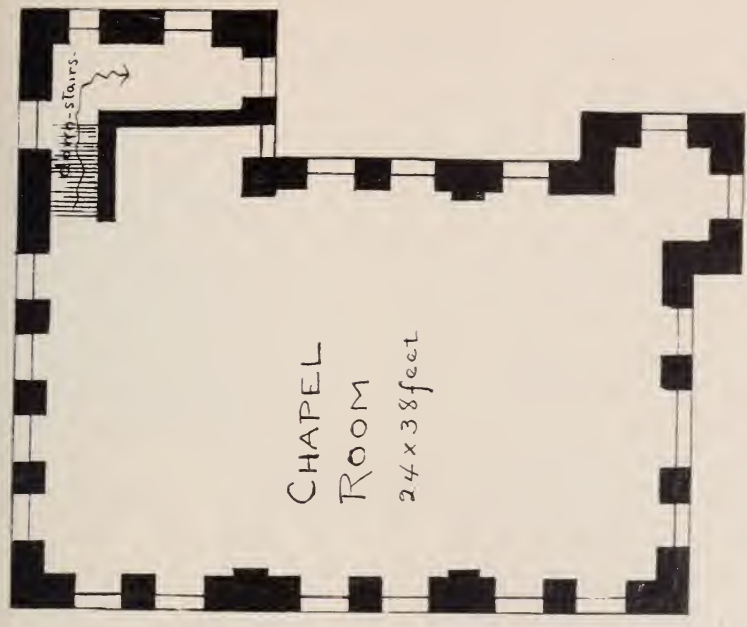
The Mission appointed a building committee to prepare plans and put up the building. The plans were drawn by Mr. Moerdyk and unanimously approved by the Mission and the Board. The building is to be of native stone, plastered inside and out, and the accompanying picture gives some idea of what the building will be. It was understood by the contribution that this was to be a Memorial Chapel and School, and we hope to put a small marble tablet in one of the walls, with the names of those in our Mission who have laid down their lives for Arabia. When the chapel and school are completed the evangelistic and educational work at Bahrein will be as well equipped with suitable shelter, as is the medical work in the Mason Memorial Hospital.

Then, to complete the picture of a thoroughly equipped mission station, Bahrein needs a mission house. At Muscat the Mission has a house of its own, but both in Busrah and at Bahrein we live in hired houses. The problem in both stations has been very acute and of long duration. In Busrah there are a few suitable houses, but rent is very high, often prohibitive. At Bahrein rents are also high and there are no dwellings suitable or healthful to be had at any price. One of the American Delegation who visited our station wrote: "I can vouch for the great need in Bahrein of a new mission house . . . the present mission house, a rented building, is entirely inadequate, unsanitary, and very much out of repair."

The plan of the Mission is not yet entirely definite, but at the annual



Ground Floor



Upper Floor

meeting it was decided that we ask the Board for \$8,000.00 to supply dwellings for all the missionary staff at Bahrein. It will probably be a large, double, two-story house, built somewhat on the plan of the hospital. Building material is expensive and labor also in the Persian Gulf, so that the sum asked is none too large for the need, although it might seem so in America.

At the last meeting of the Trustees of the Arabian Mission, on May 12, in response to this request from the missionaries, it was "Resolved that, recognizing the necessity for a suitable and permanent mission house at Bahrein, to accommodate two families, Dr. Zwemer be authorized to raise \$8,000.00 for such house, the money to be raised by subscription from individuals."

Our plan is to raise the sum from two hundred friends of Arabia:

10 at \$200.....	\$2,000
20 at 100.....	2,000
30 at 50.....	1,500
40 at 25.....	1,000
50 at 20.....	1,000
50 at 10.....	500
<hr/>	<hr/>
200	\$8,000

The response of a dozen friends has already come, and about one-tenth of the amount is pledged. As God is able to make all grace abound, also the grace of liberality, we have no doubt that soon the entire sum will be forthcoming. And we earnestly hope and pray that none of these *special* gifts will in any way decrease or delay the usual offerings for the regular work of our Mission and that in other fields. It should, on the contrary, only stir up the spirit of benevolence for the cause, even as it will surely stir up the spirits of your missionaries to more earnest effort and faithful toil in the evangelization of Arabia.

The needs of the Mission at Busrah—but that is another story. It will keep for the present.

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